

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone) *SEP 21 1948*

SUBJECT Military Activity in Potsdam, Rathenow,
and Gotha

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1. Potsdam: Between 2400 and 0030 hrs. on the night of 13-14 July 1948, twenty-eight 150 mm. long-barrelled guns passed through Potsdam. They were drawn by caterpillar tractors, and twenty-eight ammunition transports accompanied them. They went in the direction of Brandenburg-Magdeburg. Almost every day during the first half of July 1948, 150 mm. long-barrelled guns passed through Potsdam in battle order, completely camouflaged, in the same general direction of Brandenburg.
2. Soldiers with black shoulder boards and red piping were seen for the first time in Potsdam during July. They appeared at the beginning of the month. Their most distinctive insignia was a bird, as in the following sketch, which measured five centimeters across and which was attached to the shoulder boards.



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3. Rathenow (2-15): All German employees of the Pionierkaserne in Rathenow were given four weeks paid leave, beginning in the middle of July. The excuse was given that all the Russians stationed there were going on leave again. This started a local rumor to the effect that preparations for war were being made. Traffic between these barracks and the training ground at Altengrabow consisted mainly of vehicles

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There is an anti-tank ammunition depot at Premnitz; ammunition is carried regularly to Altengrabow [redacted] 50X1-HUM

5. There was a general transfer movement during mid-July from the Hagenow-Schwerin-Wittenburg/Meckl. area in the direction of Thuringia. Only rear parties appeared to be remaining in the above-mentioned places. Russian soldiers on leave in Rathenow from the Altengrabow training ground stated that their units would not be returning to Rathenow by 15 July but would move to Erfurt for maneuvers.

6. The Kraftfahren Kaserne, Semliner Weg, Rathenow, was empty of guns by mid-July. They had been moved to the Dolle training area near Gardelegen. 50X1-HUM

7. Gotha (J-06): [redacted] Gotha was, late in July, occupied only by a tank regiment which was quartered in the barracks on the west side of the town. Only tank troops and a few members of a signal unit belonging to the tank regiment were seen. The only trucks observed, which were on the move, were supply vehicles carrying rations, wood, and coal. [redacted]

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8. [redacted] in the immediate vicinity of Gotha fortifications are built by civilian contractors. No more details are available as the area on the northwest edge of Gotha has been cordoned off.

9. On 26 July 1948, staff cars [redacted] were observed on the Gotha-Ohrdruf road [redacted] 50X1-HUM

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